AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A composition for ~~the~~ an anodizing treatment of a magnesium alloy, wherein ~~it~~ the composition comprises an aqueous solution, containing a niobium salt and hydrofluoric acid, the pH of which solution is maintained at a value between 7 and 10, and wherein the niobium salt is an oxide or fluoride.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein the niobium salt is niobium pentoxide.

4. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~it contains~~ the composition further comprises a zirconium salt.

5. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 4, wherein the zirconium salt is ~~chosen from oxides and fluorides~~ an oxide or fluoride.

6. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 4, wherein the zirconium salt is ZrF_4.

7. (Previously Presented) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein the pH is between 8 and 9.5.

8. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~it contains~~ the composition further comprises phosphoric acid and/or boric acid.

9. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 3, wherein ~~it~~ the composition is supersaturated with niobium pentoxide.

10. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~it furthermore contains~~ the composition further comprises NH_4OH or an amine for ~~correcting~~ maintaining the pH.

11. (Currently Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~it contains~~ the composition comprises:

- from 0.01 to 0.04 mol/l of niobium pentoxide;
- from 20 to 50 ml/l of hydrofluoric acid;
- up to 0.04 mol/l of zirconium fluoride;
- from 50 to 70 g/l of H_3PO_4;
- from 30 to 70 g/l of H_3BO_4; and
- the required amount of a 28% aqueous ammonia solution for adjusting the pH to a value between 7 and 10.

12. (Currently Amended) A method of treating a magnesium alloy[[,]] comprising making said alloy undergo electrolysis in an electrochemical cell in which said alloy functions as anode(+), wherein:

- the electrochemical cell contains, as electrolyte, a composition according to ~~the invention~~ claim 1 at a temperature between 20°C and 40°C; and
- an initial voltage sufficient to create a current density between 1.5 and 2.5 A/dm^2, is applied to the cell and then the voltage is progressively increased up to a value between 240 and 330 V in order to maintain the initial current density.

13. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein a DC source connected in series to an AC source is used as power supply for the electrochemical cell so that the I_{AC}/I_{DC} ratio is about 0.15 to 0.30.

14. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the duration of the electrolysis is from 5 to 30 minutes.

15. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein, during a preliminary step, the alloy part to be treated is subjected to a surface cleaning operation.

16. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the surface cleaning operation is a mechanical cleaning operation using abrasive disks, followed by a degreasing operation in a hot phosphate/carbonate solution, and by a pickling operation in a dilute phosphoric acid/hydrofluoric acid solution[[,]]; or a degreasing operation followed by a pickling operation.

17. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the electrolysis is followed by a plugging treatment.

18. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the plugging treatment consists of an alternation of steps in which the alloy part is immersed in a bath and then left in air, these steps being followed by annealing at 75° - 150°C in oxygen for a few hours.

19. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the plugging treatment is carried out using an aqueous acid solution containing niobium pentoxide, cerium nitrate and zirconyl nitrate[[,]]; ~~or~~ a hot aqueous Na_2SiO_3 solution[[,]]; or an epoxy/polyamide varnish or an epoxy/amine paint.

20. (New) A method of treating a magnesium alloy comprising making said alloy undergo electrolysis in an electrochemical cell in which said alloy functions as anode(+), wherein:

- the electrochemical cell contains, as electrolyte, a composition according to claim 11 at a temperature between 20°C and 40°C; and
- an initial voltage sufficient to create a current density between 1.5 and 2.5 A/dm^2, is applied to the cell and then the voltage is progressively increased up to a value between 240 and 330 V in order to maintain the initial current density.